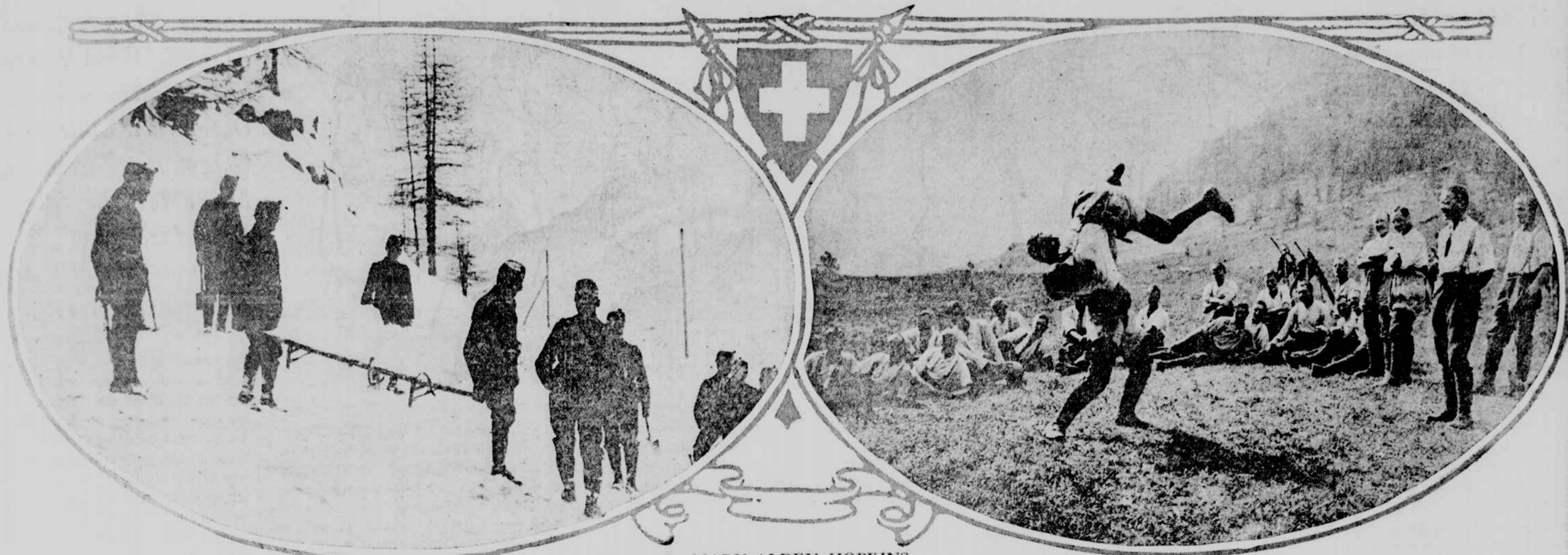


# THE SWISS ARMY IS THE SWISS NATION



Snow for Swiss Field-Works Is Both Plentiful and Cheap.

By MARY ALDEN HOPKINS

Swiss Soldiers Playing Hosenlupken, Which Means "Lifting at the Trousers."

## In the Opinion of Many, America Should Adopt the Swiss System of National Defence—That Being the Case, It Might Be Just as Well to Know What the Swiss System Is.

THE Swiss military system is the outgrowth of Swiss geography and Swiss character. We speak in a casual sort of fashion of taking over their plan of national defence as if it were a sort of preparedness poultice to be slapped on to any country suffering from undue exposure. We shall have to remodel both the system and ourselves before we can wear it easily. So far as their arrangement is the result of Swiss neighbors and Swiss mountains, we must alter the plan to suit our different needs. But where it is the outgrowth of national traits we might perhaps to advantage alter our own attitude toward the army. The Swiss plan presupposes national unity, education, obedience, democracy, disinterestedness and sacrifice of personal comfort.

### THE SWISS, ALSO, KEEP CLEAR OF "ENTANGLING ALLIANCES."

Four big, hungry nations bound this little country. Could Russia, Italy, Germany and France ever agree long enough to sit down to an amicable meal together they could pick the Swiss mountains bare of every shred of independence. The Swiss army, although it contains every able-bodied citizen, could not defeat the army of one of these countries. Switzerland's safety lies in her entire neutrality. She alone of all the nations has no "foreign policy." She makes alliances with no other nation. She will be free. In order to attain and hold her freedom in the midst of peril to her existence she has evolved a perfect national unity. Her citizens are French, German and Italian. They speak three languages. They profess two religions. Yet because they will be Swiss and not French or German or Italian they are compelled to agree. They are driven by their danger into national unity. The Swiss army is one expression of that unity.

The formation of the army begins in the early school grades. No, not with military drill. The boys have gymnastics, but no military drill in school. National defence is taught in a far subtler fashion.

One afternoon, the autumn before the war broke out, I was on the Lindenhof, the ancient, high citadel of Zürich, looking over the parapet down into the oldest part of the city. A schoolroomful of children, two by two, in a serious, happy, wabbly procession came toward me, gently scuffling through the golden, fallen leaves.

### SWISS PATRIOTISM IS TAUGHT FROM SOMETHING SUBTLER THAN BOOKS.

I had often seen these pinafores, bare-kneed boys and girls learning botany on the mountain, geography by the river and commerce in the business streets, and now I listened with interest

to their history lesson. The teacher was a small man with a dark, friendly face. He seemed to like children. The children took their live lesson as much a matter of course as our children take blackboard lessons.

The first part of the lesson the children told the teacher in reply to his questions. They told him that the Lindenhof took its name from the linden trees under which they were standing and that it had once been a Roman camp. They told him that the swift green river far below the parapet was the Limmat and that the green mountain opposite sloping up to the blue sky was Zürichberg. Then he pointed with his cane to certain large buildings. A little girl whose red tongue followed each motion of the stick was the first to cry out the name of the church—"Fraumünster." A Tyrol cape topping two bony little legs could name the Polytechnic. A blue pinafore added that it was "a school-house for men" and a pink pinafore claimed the honor of an engineering brother there.

After this preliminary placing of the citadel, the mountain, the church and the Polytechnic the friendly teacher began his story:

"Once upon a time the people of Zürich had a war with the people of Winterthur. Winterthur is just over there, behind Zürich." All eyes followed the cane. "Winterthur belonged to the Duke of Austria. The people were Austrians. After a great battle where many, many Zürich men were killed the Duke of Austria thought it would be a fine time to attack Zürich. He thought that when so many men had been killed none would be left to defend the city."

### SWISS CHILDREN ARE "PERSONALLY CONDUCTED" THROUGH THEIR HISTORY.

"So the Duke of Austria brought his army from Winterthur over Zürich and made camp right there where the Polytechnic now stands. He made camp at night. He expected the next morning to look across the Limmat over here into an empty camp on the Lindenhof. But what does he see the next morning? Does he see an empty camp?"

Anxious suspense on the small surrounding untorn faces.

"No! He sees a Lindenhof crowded with soldiers. The sun is shining on helmets and shields and swords and battle-axes. They gleam and flame in the sunlight. The place swarms with soldiers! There seem to be hundreds of them! And the Duke of Austria is so dismayed that he withdraws his forces back over Zürich and sends an ambassador to offer terms of peace!"

Great relief on the small, surrounding, upturned faces. "This was the reason there were so many soldiers here on Lindenhof. The Zürich women had met

in front of Fraumünster with all the armor and weapons they could find. They had dressed themselves in the armor and marched up here. It was the women of Zürich who sent the Duke of Austria back home. You see that statue over the fountain in the middle of the Lindenhof? It is a statue of a warrior woman placed there in honor of the heroic women who saved the city of Zürich!"

Scamper, scamper, scamper went the scuffling little feet toward the warrior woman. The eager little faces were raised in admiration toward her steadfast face of courage.

Swiss military training is training of the spirit as well as of the body. Of course we teach patriotism in the United States. One of our favorite methods is to line the pupils up to salute the flag at

erty. No political refugee taking sanctuary in Switzerland has ever been given up to his angry government. Richard Wagner, exiled from Germany, lived there seven years. Voltaire left France in his old age to find a peaceful home there. Bebel asked to be buried in "free Switzerland."

The implicit obedience which citizens yield to authority is in apparent contradiction. One day as my Swiss friend stepped on to the platform of one of the blue and white trolley cars that grunt up Zürich grades the conductor spoke to her in a low, severe tone. She shut her lips in a tight white line. I could see that she was annoyed, but she made no comment. She simply drew her hatpin from her hat. Its slender steel point had been sticking out. A sign explained to me that unguarded hatpins on street-

## There Is No Jingoism in Switzerland, No Military Class and No Politics in the Swiss Army, but When the Troops Go Out Only the Janitor and the Office Boy Are Left Behind.

dum were born there. The laws the people pass the people obey.

The Swiss army has its foundation in these traits of national unity, education and obedience to law. Its make-up is as democratic as the make-up of the government. All able-bodied citizens belong. Officers are promoted from the ranks. The pay is inconsequential. A small proportion of the troops belong to the Federal government. Most of them belong to the cantons, which correspond to our states. The Federal government, however, takes charge of the recruiting.

The population of the country is about three million. The army is about a quarter of a million. It is made up of three divisions. The Elite, or active army, includes men between twenty and thirty-two years. The Landwehr is made up of men between thirty-two and forty. The Landsturm is composed of men between forty and forty-eight and some men not eligible to the active army.

Every man not giving service must pay a tax. This is imposed in three ways. In 1911 it was a military poll tax of \$1.20, a military property tax of 15 per cent of assessed value of property of over \$200 and an income tax of 1.5 per cent. Not over \$600 is paid by any one person.

Every boy during his twentieth year undergoes an educational and physical examination. About 50 per cent pass. In numbers this is from 15,000 to 20,000 a year. Part of those who do not pass are still utilized as clerks, drivers, etc. A boy's trade is considered in assigning him his army work in order to lessen the necessary training and to make the army efficient.

Every boy who passes the examination goes to the Recruit School. This is sixty-five days for infantry, ninety days for cavalry and seventy-five days for artillery. Most of the boys come to the school already knowing a good deal about soldiery. From the time boys are eleven they are encouraged to join voluntary cadet corps, taught by army officers. The state furnishes these corps with ammunition and rifles to be used under prescribed conditions.

### A PARADE GROUND FOR CADETS? YES, THE ALPS.

The work of the recruit school is hard. No parade ground reviews in the glory of buttons and bands are permitted. On the other hand, the drudgery of drill hall and barrack yard is thrown out. All work is in the open. The manoeuvres and scouting take place along the very roads and among the very mountains which troops will be responsible for in time of war. The men are out day and night. They work fiercely and unceasingly.

Seven repetition courses of about two weeks must be served during the twelve years a man is in the Elite. One repetition

course is demanded after he is in the Landwehr.

By means of these recruit schools and repetition courses the army is practically mobilized every year. All business yields the right of way. I was in Switzerland during one of these practice mobilizations, and found that every man I had planned to interview was in camp. Neither prominence nor wealth excuses a man from military practice. A Swiss man has as much pride in doing military service as an American has in going to Congress. The business and professional life of the country is arranged in consideration of the annual mobilization.

A certain amount of target practice is also demanded of both officers and privates. Each of the 3,241 communes of the country provides a target range of not less than 300 metres. Voluntary shooting clubs are formed, using these ranges and receiving a government subsidy for ammunition. Every man upon entering the army is provided with a rifle, for which he is thereafter responsible. Any soldier whose target book does not show that he has shot the requisite number of rounds under supervision is whisked off to do three days' target practice without pay once a year. But I can't myself help thinking that rifle-shooting as a means of preparation for modern warfare is not unlike teaching little girls to hem and fell in the good old-fashioned way as a preparation for operating a six-needle, electrically-driven machine in a modern garment factory.

### SHOOTING AT TARGETS—INANIMATE ONES—IS THE NATIONAL SPORT.

Target shooting is the national Swiss sport. Time was, not so long ago, when a man was not allowed to marry till he possessed a musket and could use it. The rifle range is as recognized in Swiss social life as the annual mobilization is in the business life. Every Sunday I watched the Zürich people go trooping up Zürichberg toward the range. Father, mother and the children went trudging up the hill together. On the ridge acres of gnarled old trees grow in checkerboard rows, cut by broad paths. The quaint old chalet farmhouses in the neighborhood have all turned themselves into informal inns, with cakes and drinks at tables under the trees. The yellow sunshine, the mountain breeze, the scattered bands, the incessant crackling of the rifles make an environment for a happy Sunday afternoon.

Once, strolling along a woodland path, I heard the rat-a-tat-tat of a drum. I hurried on to see the troops. Rat-a-tat-tat, it drummed them up from all about. It called the spirit of '76. I hurried nearer and nearer. Not a soldier did I

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IN TIME OF PEACE THE SWISS DIG TRENCHES.

Photos by Underwood &amp; Underwood.

a given signal in beautiful unison. This ceremony shows our good intentions and is quicker than the Swiss system, but it does not give our children a really intelligent grasp of the ideal of common welfare.

The Swiss idea of freedom comprises two qualities which we are wont to consider antagonistic. The Swiss combine liberty and obedience in their government. The "right of asylum" concretely illustrates their insistence upon lib-

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